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'PX Alley' Disrupted By Saigon Police Raid

SAIGON (AP)—Saigon's "PX alley" was cleared today of the maze of sidewalk black market stalls that offered all buyers everything from combat uniforms to hair spray. The crackdown was announced in advance and the dealers moved much of their stock beforehand.

Vietnamese police moved in early in the morning, dragged some of the goods into small piles and poured gasoline over them. Clothing, foodstuffs and toilet articles went up in flames.

Bottles of whisky were smashed and cans of beer and insecticide were ripped open with bayonets.

The articles seized and destroyed were only a small part of the stocks that formerly were spread along the curbs of the streets near the U.S. Embassy, nearly choking off movement along the sidewalks.

The police action was aimed chiefly at shutting down the sale of illicit goods obtained from U.S. post exchanges and commissaries. Some of this was stolen before it reached the American installations, while some was bought or bartered from U.S. servicemen.

The section raided today was

only one of four black market areas operating in Saigon, but its location in the heart of the downtown area so close to the U.S. Embassy was particularly embarrassing.

The sidewalks along PX alley were cleared by noon and the "mamasans" who operated the thriving stalls talked in little groups and cast unfriendly looks at the white-uniformed police.

Many of them had kept most of their supplies out of the area today or had unloaded much of their stock in crash sales before the promised clampdown. Some complained bitterly over the police action, saying they were only trying to make a small profit as middlemen.

In Washington, meanwhile, Sen. Milton R. Young, R-N. Dak., said he will arrive in Saigon today to look into graft and corruption in the handling of U.S. aid and to check on progress of the war.

Young will be ranking Republican member of the Senate Appropriations Committee in the 90th Congress and also is on the select, seven-member Senate committee that keeps tabs on funds for the Central Intelligence Agency.